



King County
Rural Forest Commission

Minutes - King County Rural Forest Commission Meeting Thursday, January 19, 2017, Preston Community Center

Commissioners present: Nate Veranth, forest landowner (Chair); Rex Thompson, forester; Andy Chittick, forest landowner/sawmill operator; Amy LaBarge, forester; Grady Steere, Campbell Global; Brandy Reed, King Conservation District; Monica Paulson Priebe, Green River College; Daryl Harper, forest landowner

Guests: Laurie Benson, Washington Department of Natural Resources; Mike Lasecki, King Conservation District

King County Staff: Fereshteh Dehkordi, Department of Development and Environmental Review; David Kimmett, Parks and Recreation Division (Parks); Bill Loeber, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD); Richard Martin, WLRD; Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

Chair Nate Veranth called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motions

Motion 1- 0117 That the minutes of the November 10, 2016 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion 2 - 0117 That each person, after reviewing the County's Comprehensive Plan material that staff will send out in two weeks, will compare the list of issues relative to the three categories of edits and at the next meeting discuss the entire list of issues that have been presented out of all three categories discussed. The motion passed unanimously.

Election of Officers

Election of officers for 2017-18 – Nate Veranth was elected to the position of Chair and Rex Thompson to the position of Vice Chair. The at-large Executive Committee members will be Monica Paulson-Priebe and Amy LaBarge.

Annual financial disclosure forms

Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

Linda distributed the annual financial disclosure forms.

Recruiting new commission members

Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

Linda announced that there would be three open positions on the Commission soon. She encouraged the Commission members to assist with outreach during the recruitment period.

King Conservation Programs Update

Brandy Reed, Interagency Director, Implementation & Education Programs Manager
King Conservation District

Brandy reported on new King Conservation District (KCD) program offerings. She said that under the terms of a lawsuit the KCD had been awarded funding to expand programs and services for assisting with the implementation phase of forest stewardship planning. With over 14,000 acres in this category,

resources would be targeted toward properties that are, for example, adjacent to open spaces or already enrolled in the Public Benefit Rating System, said Brandy.

The second piece of the forest health strategy would be Firewise, said Brandy. She explained that while Firewise planning assistance was not specifically called out as a priority in the KCD's five year plan, it was identified by stakeholders as a priority action in the event that funding became available. She explained that the KCD had been collaborating closely with the County's Firewise work so as not to duplicate efforts. The KCD would provide wildfire risk assessments, community planning and hosting of fuels reduction activities on individual properties as well as community events.

The new initiation would focus on how to strengthen the systems in place that support small forest health management, such as infrastructure or economic systems, said Brandy. She said that the KCD would like to have the Commission's help in formulating services such as equipment loan programs; investment in supporting private sector businesses, such as small sawmills; or developing cooperative approaches for landowners have had difficulty finding consultants to do forest management work for them.

Brandy went on to describe the three elements of work under the Agricultural Initiative that the additional funding would support:

- Agricultural Drainage Assistance program to help increase farmable acres;
- Discovery Farms Process, a science-based, site-specific monitoring of best management practices (BMP) to validate the efficacy of the KCD's BMPs to protect water quality and other natural resources while maintaining agricultural productivity.
- Explore a strategy for keeping agricultural viable and maintaining a robust food system in King County.

Brandy took questions and comments from the Commission.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Definition of "forestry" in King County code and potential reorganization of code tables

Fereshteh Dehkordi

Department of Permitting and Environmental Review

Fereshteh reported on her work with the Commission's 'definition of forestry' committee. She distributed several draft documents of edits to King County Code (KCC) for review and discussion. These were:

- Amendments to the existing definition of "forestry" in KCC 21A.06;
- A new definition of "Forestry Uses" to be added KCC 21A.06.531A; and
- Amendments to KCC Title 21A that move all of the forestry-related code provisions, which are currently scattered throughout the chapter, to 21A.0821A.08.090 Resource land uses.

Fereshteh explained that she used the Commission's previous discussions on this topic as a starting point for these first drafts. Her understanding was that the effort would be to make the code easier to use. She explained how the code is structured. The structure of the Land Use Chapter is to list all of the land use

types in tables, e.g., retail, manufacturing, and so forth, she said. The proposed changes would bring all forestry-related code into a single table.

A wide ranging discussion of portions of the current code that commissioners found confusing, contradictory, or in need of being changed to better serve forest landowners.

The Commission decided to develop a first draft of comprehensive proposal of the code changes that they would like to see, including refining the definition of forestry in County code, finding inconsistencies and addressing the needs of the forest community. A timeline and goals were established.

The Commission agreed that members would submit ideas for changes in three categories:

1. Comments on the definition of forest
2. Comments on existing law and the reorganized table, including addressing inconsistencies
3. New code and policy related issues and suggestions for improvements.

Motion – That each person, after reviewing the County’s Comprehensive Plan material that staff will send out in two weeks, will compare the list of issues relative to the three categories of edits and at the next meeting discuss the entire list of issues that have been presented out of all three categories discussed. The motion passed unanimously. Monica Priebe moved; Rex Thompson seconded.

Cultural Resources Overview

Steven Mullen-Moses

Director of Archeology and Historic Preservation, Snoqualmie Tribe

The presentation was postponed until a later date.

Staff and Agency Reports and Announcements

King Conservation District (KCD) – Brandy Reed asked that a representative of the Commission serve on a stakeholder work group to formalize the KCD’s approach to applying the new funding described in her presentation. She also asked that the Commission designate a new representative to the KCD Advisory Committee because the current representative would be leaving that role soon. Andy Chittick agreed to serve in both capacities.

King County – Richard Martin announced that Kristi McClelland had retired after seventeen years as a King County Forester. The County would begin recruiting for the vacant position soon.

David Kimmet encouraged the Commission to invite a representative of a small sawmill operation to speak to the commission about services such as custom milling and forest management consulting that support the rural economy.

Campbell Global– Grady Steere asked for assistance in locating large cooler space for tree seedlings in the months of January through April/May. This could be an opportunity for agricultural storage facilities during months that agriculture is less active than in other seasons, he said.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on March 16, 2017, at the Preston Community Center.